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DESERT VOICE



Under the knife

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On the Cover

Cdr. Gregg Wolff opens an incision to remove a cyst as Lt. Robert Creamer assists.

Photo by Sgt. Matt Millham

Fort Mac makes the list

Story by Eric W. Cramer

Army News Service

The Army will close 15 major installations over the next six years and close or realign hundreds of small installations, including Army Reserve and National Guard facilities, if DoD Base Realignment and Closure recommendations released May 13 receive final approval.

Major Army installations slated for closure are: Fort Monroe, Va.; Fort McPherson, Ga.; Fort Gillem, Ga.; Fort Monmouth, N.J.; Newport Chemical Depot, Ind.; Kansas Army Ammunition Plant; Selfridge Army Activity, Mich.; Mississippi Army Ammunition Plant; Hawthorne Army Depot, Nev.; Umatilla Chemical Depot, Ore.; Lone Star Army Ammunition Plant, Texas; Red River Army Depot, Texas; Desert Chemical Depot, Utah; Riverbank Army Ammunition Plant, Calif.; and Charles E. Kelly Support Center, Pa.

In addition to closing these installations, the plan would close 176 Army Reserve and 211 Army National Guard facilities. These will be replaced by 125 multi-component Armed Forces Reserve Centers.

The changes are part of a total BRAC package expected to save the Department of Defense about \$50 billion over the next two decades, officials said.

Gen. Richard Cody, vice chief of staff for the Army, said the changes to the reserve-component structure are designed to bring the Army Reserve and National Guard in line with the Army's new modular, unit-of-action structure.

Lt. Gen. H. Steven Blum, chief of the Army National Guard Bureau, said the changes in the Guard and Reserve centers will not only lead to better efficiency within the units, but will also lead to improved recruitment.

"We hope it will affect recruitment and retention in a positive way," Blum said. "By divesting ourselves of some of the more remote facilities and moving to areas with better demographics, it should allow for positive change."

The BRAC proposal also calls for a change in location for a number of large commands and Army functions. Among these is the relocation of the Armor Center, currently at Fort Knox, Ky., to Fort Benning, Ga., to become part of a new Maneuver Center there.

"What Knox gets in return," Cody said, "is we'll activate a modular brigade combat team there. Accessions Command will go there and the Cadet Command. Human

Resources will move out of [leased] space and go to Fort Knox. We're also moving an air defense artillery brigade from Fort Bliss, Texas, to Fort Sill (Okla.) to create a Fires Center."

Training and Doctrine Command will move from Fort Monroe, Va., to Fort Eustis, Va., as Fort Monroe closes under the current BRAC proposal, Cody said.

Whether these changes are approved depends on actions by the BRAC commission, said Michael Wynne, assistant undersecretary of defense for acquisition, technology and logistics.

The commission, made up of former legislators and military experts, will forward its recommendations to the president after reviewing the Department of Defense recommendations. It must take action by Sept. 8. The president will then have until Sept. 23 to accept or reject the recommendations in their entirety. If accepted, Congress then has 45 days to reject the recommendations before they become binding.

Specific changes must begin within two years of the recommendation's acceptance, and must be complete within six years, without interrupting ongoing operations, Wynne said.

Proposed changes

Relocate Army Materiel Command headquarters to Redstone Arsenal, Ala.

Relocate the 7th Special Forces Group from Fort Bragg, N.C., to Eglin Air Force Base, Fla.

Relocate Forces Command Headquarters and U.S. Army Reserve Command to Pope Air Force Base, N.C.

Stations Third Army headquarters with the Air Force component of U.S. Forces Central Command at Shaw Air Force Base, S.C.

Move the Installation Management Agency headquarters to Fort Sam Houston, Texas.

Activates modular BCTs at Fort Bliss, Texas; Fort Bragg, N.C.; Fort Knox, Ky.; and Fort Riley, Kan.

Create a new medical hospital and research facility, the Walter Reed National Military Medical Center in Bethesda, Md., and builds a new 165-bed hospital at Fort Belvoir, Va.

Reactions from Kuwait



Spc. Averian Francis
Administrative Specialist
Third Army Provost
Marshall's Office
Stationed at Fort McPherson
since early 2004

DV: What was your reaction?

"I was shocked, and I was devastated. I don't know where I'm gonna go. It's like someone's kicking you out of your house. But if it's better for the Army, then I'm for it."



Sgt. Derrell Bowman
Light-Wheeled Mechanic
Third Army Headquarters
and Headquarters Company
Stationed at Fort Gillem
since 2001

DV: What was your reaction?

"I was kind of shocked at first. Atlanta is a good place to be. I work on Fort Gillem, but Fort Gillem and Fort McPherson work hand in hand."

DV: What are your thoughts on the move?

"It's the military. You've gotta adapt and overcome. You've gotta roll with it."



Chief Warrant Officer Winfred Hill
Intelligence Officer
Third Army Reserve
Augmentation Company
Drilled at Fort McPherson
since Dec. 2002

DV: As a reservist, how will Fort McPherson's closing affect you?

"If Third Army itself has to move, I'll probably have to find another unit."

DV: If Third Army does move, what will affect you the most?

"The fact that I'll no longer be associated with Third Army. I've been there since December of 2002. I've been deployed twice since then, and I still like the unit."

Training freshens troops' confidence

Story and photo by
Spc. Aimee Felix

Training at Udairi Range is old hat for a maintenance company from Babenhausen, Germany, that's done it all before.

In Germany, the 77th Maintenance Company went through convoy live-fire training and close quarters marksmanship training similar to what they went through before deploying to Iraq late last week well-trained and in high spirits.

"This will make three times in the last six months we've done live-fire training," said Capt. Alex Hunt, the 77th company commander.

The Soldiers seemed comfortable at Udairi Range, said Hunt, who attributed that confidence to the training experience of the Soldiers and to the fact that more than half of the company has deployed to Iraq once before.

"It builds confidence when you know this stuff," the kind of confidence every Soldier needs in today's battlefield, regardless of their military occupational specialty, said Hunt who deployed as a supply officer during Operation Iraqi Freedom 1.

The 77th received its deployment orders the first week of February, and by then, it had already done a live-fire battle drill in December, said Hunt. The 77th conducted its second live-fire exercise during pre-deployment training, and that was in addition to several dummy-fire battle drills and convoy training exercises the 77th regularly conducted last year.

"The training's a lot better than for my first [deployment]; we were just shoved out there the first time around," said 77th maintenance Soldier Spc. Jennifer Rivera, 25, who deployed to Mosul during OIF 1 as a maintenance technician.

With their basic Soldier skills mastered, these maintenance troops will be able to focus on their main mission – fixing things. "They want to get this over with and go turn wrenches," said Hunt.

The 77th Maintenance Company, which is 250 Soldiers strong, is larger than most companies, said Hunt. It's deploying to provide backup maintenance for the entire Iraq theater, which means whatever a unit in Iraq can't fix within their own division, the 77th Maintenance Company will.

"We can fix just about everything," said 1st Lt. Andy Lawrence, a 77th Maintenance Company platoon leader.



Spc. Joseph Koch, a maintenance Soldier with 77th Maintenance Company from Babenhausen, Germany, fires from the four-meter line at the Close Quarters Marksmanship Training Range at Udairi Range May 16. Koch, 25 is originally from Enterprise, Ala.

To have a complete maintenance company capable of maintaining an entire theater of operations, the company pulled together Soldiers from five different posts across Germany, said Hunt.

Now the 77th is a company capable of fixing trucks, radios, generators, power supplies, "and the list goes on," said Lawrence.

Though its Soldiers came from all over Germany, the 77th is still a very tight-knit group – some are tighter than others.

Spc. Shane Maxwell, 22, is deployed on this mission with his wife of six months, Desiree, 19. "I'm glad I can watch over her," said Shane. Desiree is particularly glad to be there with her husband because if either of them has to participate in one of the many convoy supply runs the 77th's logistics element will have to do in Iraq, she'll draw courage from his presence, she said.

The couple has been told they can't show public affection, but Desiree doesn't mind because she gets to have the support of her husband on this yearlong deployment.

Others won't be as lucky. Rivera said goodbye to her husband and two children soon after arriving at the unit. Rivera's first deployment happened six months after her 2-year-old son was born. Her unit, the 54th Engineer Battalion from Fort Carson, Colo., deployed the same month she gave birth, and her leaders gave her six months before she had to meet up with the unit in Mosul.

Rivera says she was luckier this time around. Both her 5-year-old daughter and her son

had their birthdays in March. "At least I didn't miss that," she said. Rivera was even optimistic about the desert's scorching summer heat. "Ah, I was born and raised in California; I'm used to it," she said. Rivera added that because they deployed from Germany instead of from the United States, the Soldiers didn't have to deal with recovering from jetlag.

"I'm really impressed by their morale, and by how well they've absorbed the training," said Hunt, who said that while the size of the company can sometimes be overwhelming, the experience in the group makes up for it.

"The Soldiers seem anxious to do their job, and the plan is to do the maintenance mission, but we're training for as many possible scenarios as we can," said Hunt.

Camp Arifjan celebrates Asian Pacific Heritage Month



Polynesian Paradise, a Hawaiian Dance group, dances at Camp Arifjan's Zone 6 stage May 15. The group visited camps in Iraq and Kuwait to celebrate Asian Pacific Heritage Month. The visit was made possible by Capt. John Nakl, Morale Welfare and Recreation officer for the 1st Battalion, 487th Field Artillery stationed at Kuwaiti Naval Base, who owns an entertainment company in Hawaii.

Photo by Spc. Aimee Felix

New law raises SGLI payouts

Story by Donna Miles

American Forces Press Service

Defense and Veterans Affairs officials are ironing out details of programs that will expand benefits provided through Servicemembers' Group Life Insurance.

The \$82 billion supplemental legislation signed into law by President Bush May 11 increases maximum SGLI coverage to \$400,000 and provides payouts of up to \$100,000 for servicemembers with traumatic injuries, explained Stephen Wurtz, the VA's deputy assistant director for insurance. The increased SGLI coverage will take effect Sept. 1, and the so-called "traumatic SGLI" benefit, December 1. Wurtz said the legislation directs that both benefits will be retroactive to Oct. 7, 2001.

Traumatic SGLI benefits will be retroactive for troops who have lost limbs, eyesight or speech or received other traumatic injuries as a direct results of injuries received during Operation Iraqi Freedom or Operation Enduring Freedom. The benefit does not apply to servicemembers suffering from disease.

The retroactive coverage increase is payable as a result of deaths in either operation, or under other conditions prescribed by the secretary of defense, Wurtz said.

Servicemembers enrolled in the SGLI program will notice an increase in their premiums when the increases take effect. The traumatic SGLI benefit will be rolled into the basic SGLI program and will likely cost about \$1 a month, Wurtz said.

Troops opting for maximum SGLI coverage — \$400,000 vs. the current \$250,000 — will see their monthly premiums increase from \$16.25 to \$26, Wurtz said. This is based on the rate of 6.5 cents per \$1,000 of insurance coverage.

SGLI coverage is currently available in \$10,000 increments, but as of Sept. 1, the increments will increase to \$50,000.

Because the rates have not changed, servicemembers who retain \$250,000 or less coverage will see no increase in their premiums, Wurtz said, except for the \$1 "traumatic SGLI" premium.

While these expanded benefits will be provided retroactively, affected servicemembers won't be charged retroactive payments, he said. DoD will absorb that cost.

In a new twist introduced through the supplemental legislation, troops with dependents must get their spouse's approval to purchase less than the full amount of SGLI coverage. In the case of members who are not married, notice will be provided to the designated beneficiary

when the member purchases less than the maximum coverage.

The new traumatic SGLI benefit is designed to provide "a quick infusion of cash" for cash-strapped families of troops recuperating from traumatic injuries received in the line of duty, Wurtz said.

Compensation will range from \$25,000 to \$100,000, and is designed to help families of severely wounded troops leave their homes and jobs to be with their loved one during recovery. "These families incur a lot of expenses, and this is designed to help them financially," Wurtz said.

While VA staff members consult with DoD to write regulations that will put the new SGLI benefits into effect, Wurtz said, "lots and lots of details have to be worked out."

Among outstanding issues is the fact that the expanded SGLI coverage is part of the supplemental legislation package that funds operations only through Sept. 30. That's 30 days after the new SGLI limit takes effect and two months before the traumatic SGLI benefit begins.

Wurtz said VA is confident Congress will resolve this issue before there's any lapse in coverage.

VA will continue to oversee and control the SGLI program.

Changes to coverage

SGLI premiums are slated to go up \$1 a month extra

The basic SGLI program will now include a "traumatic SGLI" benefit that will pay benefits to troops who've lost life, limb, or eye sight.

Maximum coverage will raise from \$250,000 to \$400,000. The premium will raise from \$16.25 to \$26.

The minimum coverage will raise from \$10,000 to \$50,000.

Troops with dependents must get their spouse's approval to purchase less than the full amount of coverage.

The minimum coverage will raise from \$10,000 to \$50,000.

Italian troops thank hospital



courtesy photo

From left to right: Lt. George Womble, Senior Chief Daniel Severson, Cdr. Ed George, Cdr. Joseph Costabile, Capt. Manuel Rivera, the Italian defense attache, his deputy and a high-ranking Italian official, Petty Officer 2nd Class John Jennejahn, Cdr. Dianne Capri, Petty Officer 3rd Class Myte Dahl, Petty Officer 3rd Class Pete Sanchez pose after these members of Expeditionary Medical Facility-Dallas awarded a certificate and an American flag to the family of Italian soldier Salvatore Marracino. Marracino died an accidental death March 15 in Iraq during a training exercise. The attaches were impressed with the respect EMF-Dallas staff showed for an Italian soldier.



Cdr. Gregg Wolff opens an incision to remove a large cyst from the wrist of a Soldier as Lt. Robert Creamer assists at U.S. Military Hospital Kuwait May 13. To be closer to his unit, the Soldier came to Kuwait, rather than the United States or Germany, for the operation.

Preparing the surgeon's scalpel

Story and photos by Sgt. Matt Millham

A bad day for most people doesn't end with someone dying on a table in front of them. It can if that person is a Navy surgical technician.

But that's not most days, especially not in Kuwait. Most days at Expeditionary Medical Facility-Dallas are good days for these highly-trained Navy corpsmen.

EMF-Dallas, the name given to a tent-dwelling congregation of surgeons, nurses, physician assistants and people in other medical specialties, is tucked into a back corner of Camp Arifjan. The camp is one of the few military installations where you'll find a medical clinic with concrete walls and a hospital with cloth walls.

The cluster of tents that makes up the ultra-modern field hospital doesn't have the aura of television's M*A*S*H, but you can chalk that up to the old real estate adage about location and the lack of action here in Kuwait. For most of the staff, the deployment to Kuwait is a change of pace, but not the kind of change most people in the mili-

tary experience when they deploy overseas.

EMF-Dallas is staffed almost exclusively by reservists, who for the most part in their civilian lives, work in hospitals back in the United States. One of those reservists is Petty Officer 3rd Class Duane McGuffee, a surgical technician, who as a civilian works as an operating room technician at a level-1 trauma center in Minneapolis.

On a weekend in Minneapolis, McGuffee, who spent five years on active duty in the Navy as a corpsman, is likely to see more trauma than he'll see during his entire year here. At home he regularly deals with shootings, stabbings and, more than anything else, serious automobile accidents. So it's not unreasonable for McGuffee to have assumed that he'd be a bit closer to the action where he could put his 13 years of medical experience to good use.

He said he's not disappointed EMF-Dallas wasn't sent farther north, "but I am surprised — with the quality of people we have here — that we weren't. I think about

half of our corpsmen are registered nurses, paramedics or [physician assistants]." The average age of the hospital staff is roughly 39, said McGuffee. That's quite a bit older — and more experienced — than he encountered during his active duty days at three of the Navy's biggest hospitals, including the National Naval Medical Center in Bethesda, Md.

But most trauma cases in Iraq aren't treated in Iraq either — they get sent to Germany, said McGuffee. The main reason the most severe cases go north rather than south is because Kuwait's field hospital lacks the facilities for patients to recover from their surgeries, said McGuffee, whose job, surgical technician, commonly referred to as OR tech, is actually a specialty within the corpsman rating.

While active, he applied to the OR tech program and, after acceptance, completed a rigorous 6-month course to prepare him for the operating room. When he got off active duty with this specialty, he had "job offers out the yin-yang," he said. He volunteered to come here, he said, to pay back

what the Navy had given him and to do what he never did while on active duty – deploy in service of his country.

Even with the lack of trauma cases, McGuffee said he's probably busier here than he would be up north. Kuwait handles many of the elective surgeries that troops would normally go to Germany or the United States to have done. Usually EMF-Dallas' operating room handles six or seven of these cases a day.

McGuffee stays busy preparing the operating rooms and instruments for those cases and assisting in many of those procedures. "A big part of our day is getting ready for the next day," he said. He also passes instruments to the surgeon and even does some suturing, casting and occasionally assists the surgeon in procedures. McGuffee assists on more surgeries back home where he's a certified first assistant, he said.

The most cases he's seen come through in a day is an even dozen. In the five months he's been here, McGuffee estimates he's seen more than 500 cases. Seconding that estimate was Cdr. Carol Hillman, assistant department head for the operating room of EMF-Dallas, who is the

director of an operating room at Mercy Medical Center in Des Moines, Iowa, as a civilian. She has seen even more cases come through since she arrived in November.

The worst case she remembers involved a truck that ran over some Soldiers who were changing a truck tire on one of Kuwait's highways. The driver drove off before anyone could stop him. One of the Soldiers was killed, and one came into the field hospital with his legs and pelvis broken.

They were able to save the injured Soldier, and after he was stabilized, he was airlifted to Germany.

But most days here are more mundane. The first surgery of the day May 13 involved removing a cyst from a patient's wrist. The troop was down from Iraq for the surgery, a routine procedure. Minor surgeries like this come to Kuwait because it's even harder for troops to recover in Iraq. The environment there is just too dirty, said McGuffee.

The patient, who has a lump the size of a water bottle cap on his wrist, is rendered unconscious, and another OR tech, Petty Officer 3rd Class Michael Gibboney, hands the surgeon a scalpel. The surgeon, Cdr.

Gregg Wolff, cuts the wrist open along what looks like a scar. It turns out the patient had the same surgery on the same spot twice before he came into the Army.

The next surgery is for hemorrhoids. This is not an uncommon affliction, though many sufferers are embarrassed about it. Other common cases the operating room sees involve lacerations, knee scopes, ankle fractures, appendectomies, hernias, head injuries and colonoscopies.

But even if things aren't interesting on their own, regular, unscripted mass casualty drills keep the operating room staff on their game. While most of the 20-or-so medevacs that come in a week aren't emergencies or trauma cases, "we have to be ready for them at any given time, because you never know what those helicopters are going to bring in," said Hillman.

Just as they are readying the patient for the hemorrhoid surgery, a surprise mass casualty exercise is sprung on the hospital. "If we're in here doing a surgery and we get a MASCAL, it can be a real nightmare," said McGuffee. Fortunately, this one is just for practice, and they won't have to break out the operating table next to the patient, who has already received his anesthesia.



Left: Petty Officer 3rd Class Duane McGuffee, a Navy corpsman specializing as a surgical technician, readies surgical tools for an elective surgical procedure May 13 at Camp Arifjan's field hospital. Right top: Before a surgery, everyone involved in the procedure will scrub in before suiting up. Bottom: In order to numb him from the waist down for hemorrhoid surgery, a patient is given anesthesia through his back.

U.S. takes on little leaguers

Troops play Kuwaitis in baseball game

Story and photo by Spc. Almee Felix

A mix of Kuwaiti and American little leaguers held a May 20 event that allowed Soldiers deployed to Kuwait to enjoy America's favorite pastime – outside the confines of the berm.

The event, called Friendship Day, was an all-day baseball event created by the Kuwait Little League Association to bring a piece of home to Soldiers in Kuwait and to grant the wish of about 40 little leaguers.

"They were excited about interacting with the Soldiers," said Sulaiman Al Mughrabi, president of the Kuwait League Association who added that the event came at the request of the little leaguers themselves.

When the Soldiers arrived at the Kuwait City park, the little leaguers, ages 14 to 21, greeted them by waving Kuwaiti and American flags and handing out carnations.

The idea was for the kids to get to know the Soldiers and for Soldiers to get a glimpse of real life in Kuwait, said Al Mughrabi.

With that idea in mind, all Al Mughrabi needed was a team of Soldiers to get approval to leave their camp, but he didn't get his hopes up. "We wanted to do a simi-

lar activity on Kuwait Liberation Day (Feb. 26), but because of security reasons no Soldiers could travel into the city."

Civilian contractor David Lovell, one of the little league coaches who works at the Seaport of Debarkation, saw a group of Soldiers playing at the SPOD and approached them about playing with the little leaguers. "Of course we wanted to. We just needed to be cleared," said Sgt. 1st Class Vladimir Hidrovo, a 143rd Transportation Command noncommissioned officer.

Brig. Gen. William H. Johnson, commander of the 143rd Transportation Command, made it happen, said Hidrovo, appreciative of the fact that Johnson sought Coalition Forces Land Component Command's approval for the outing.

After the Soldiers got approval, they had to figure out how to make time to practice during their 12-hour-a-day, seven-day-a-week work schedule and where to get gear from, said Hidrovo.

The little league association provided hats and bats, and the Camp Patriot command cell gave the team balls and gloves.

"We practiced for two and a half weeks, we got our gear, and now we're here, so let's play ball," said Hidrovo.

After the Kuwait and U.S. national anthems and a gift presentation to Brig. Gen. John Mulholland, the chief of the Office of Military Cooperation – Kuwait, and an assistant coach for the little league majors division since he arrived to Kuwait more than a year ago, the games finally began.

Each side fielded two teams for the four-game tournament. The opposing teams took turns against each other in shortened games that ran 45 minutes.

The first game looked like a bad sign of things to come for the little leaguers, when the Soldiers took the game 6-1. "This is a goodwill game. Everyone just got together to have fun," said SPOD Soldier Spc. Mark Nakamura, who was sorry the Americans had won.

While the little leaguers also lost the second game, they were closing in on the opposition in their 6-4 loss.

In the 45 minute break between the first two games and the last two games, the two SPOD teams decided to show off their skills



Kuwait little league pitcher Abdullah Bourahmah, warms up before a game between a team of Soldiers from the Seaport of Debarkation and little leaguers.

and play a competitive, high-energy game against each other – maybe a little too energetic.

After exhausting themselves in their display of overconfidence, the Soldiers lost the last two games. The little leaguers played competitively, proving the first two were just warm-ups. The kids took a 7 to 4 win in the third game and a 5 to 2 win in the fourth. The troops seemed glad to see the children cheered up – even happier than they were when they themselves won.

When the events were over, the U.S. Ambassador to Kuwait Richard LeBaron, who attended the event later in the day, presented medals to all the participants.

"This was a great opportunity to be able to get off the base and 'let their hair down,' so to speak," said Sgt. Maj. Thomas Fenton, SPOD sergeant major. The SPOD team found out a month ago that their outing was approved by CFLCC, but that came after much coordination and after thinking, many times, that it was never going to happen, said Fenton.

The transportation, security forces and movement control Soldiers may have enjoyed leaving the SPOD for a day, but the outing had a greater effect on the little leaguers to whom the Soldiers were heroes for a day, said Al Mughrabi.



Hawaiian National Guard Soldier Pfc. Daysen Chang eyes a high fly ball he hit during the first of a four-game tournament May 20.

Night shift



photo illustration by Spc. Brian Trapp

The nocturnal side of Kuwait

By Spc. Curt Cashour

When Spc. Tina Roman wakes up, it's rarely to the sound of an alarm clock.

The sounds of her tent mates getting ready for work and occasional artillery blasts from the nearby Udairi Range frequently interrupt her sleep routine. Sometimes it's hard to get a good night's sleep during the middle of the day.

A third-shift operations specialist at the Camp Virginia Command Cell, Roman is one of a large number of Kuwait-based troops who every night prove that the war on terror isn't simply a nine-to-five job.

While most of the camp's residents sleep, Roman and other members of the 687th Quartermaster Battalion, an Army Reserve unit from Decatur, Ill., are manning Virginia's command cell to help nocturnal contract workers, ensure radio connectivity with other camps and take care of any Soldier issues that may arise at any time of the night.

A few months ago, during the height of the surge, Roman's evenings were a lesson in reflexes. Throughout the night, she and the rest of the third-shift staff were providing road-weary units shuffling in and out of camp with everything from toilet paper to meals ready to eat. The pace was unrelenting, Roman said.

"During the surge, we don't have a chance to sit down and do anything," she said.

Now that the surge is over, the uncalculated nature of Roman's job sometimes leads to breaks in the action, which she fills by studying for Army Distance Learning classes, she said.

Meanwhile, Sailors from Expeditionary Medical Facility-Dallas, a Navy Reserve unit with members from 48 different states, are on hand every night at the U.S. Military Hospital Kuwait at Camp Arifjan to tend to

the medical needs of injured troops.

A typical nighttime shift lasts from 7 p.m. to 7 a.m., and all EMF-Dallas staff take turns working nights. Duties for a typical third shift include prepping patients for early-morning surgeries and tending to basic patient needs. The usually slow pace of nighttime work gives care providers a chance to get to know their patients and provides the Sailors with an opportunity to train for different emergency medical scenarios with varying numbers of medical support staff, said Cmdr. Dianne Capri, an EMF-Dallas charge nurse.

"If we don't have something going on, that's when its time to act like there's something going on," she said.

Whether dealing with common injuries or obscure ailments, routines for providing medical care must be second nature to hospital staff, and each Sailor must know their precise role, depending on how big the care-providing team is, Capri said.

And while some nights may be slow, "when it hits the fan, it really hits the fan," she said.

Across camp at the Arifjan Arms Room, a team of three Combat Support Associates

ensures that servicemembers from more than 100 units have nighttime access to their small arms weapons.

"My biggest issue is that people think night crews don't do nothing," said Hector Delvalle, a small arms repairman.

Units and personnel filter into the arms room at all hours of the night as they enter and exit the camp or head to and from guard duty. At times, night shift workers even encounter more traffic than day shift staff.

"Some nights it's quiet, some nights it's hell," Delvalle said.

Even with all the traffic, night shift workers at the arms room generally see fewer customers than their daytime counterparts. During lulls, the nighttime trio focuses on administrative work, cleaning and organizing and whatever the day crew didn't have time to finish during its shift, Delvalle said.

Small arms repairman Jeff Bregman said he prefers to work third shift because he has trouble sleeping at night. But because he and other CSA contractors are permitted to eat only at Arifjan's Zone 1 dining facility, which doesn't serve midnight chow, he has to bring food from home.

Night shift workers tend to agree on the perks of the late shift. The weather is cooler, the work environment is usually more peaceful and, according to Delvalle, overnight shifts offer workers a bit more autonomy.

"At night you don't have anybody looking

over your shoulder. At night you're the one that makes the decisions," he said.

Another benefit: because of the time difference, the schedules of night-time workers in

Kuwait are similar to

those of their friends and family back in the United States said Bregman, who often visits the phone center during his breaks to make calls back to the United States.

According to Roman, one of the best things about working third-shift is that she has the freedom to take her time with the folks who come into the command cell for help.

"You've got time to get to know the Soldiers that come in. It's not just a face that's in and out."

"At night you don't have anybody looking over your shoulder. At night you're the one that makes the decisions." – Hector Delvalle

Killer bees swarm, sting, win

Story and photo by Sgt. Matt Millham

While it didn't produce the excitement of an American Idol finale, the Area Support Group-Kuwait basketball finals did provide an answer to one of life's burning questions: which would win in a fight to the death – scorpions or killer bees?

The answer justifies a childhood spent indoors in anticipation of the swarm we always heard about on television. Killer bees trump scorpions, no contest.

The 75 – 45 finale, held at Camp Arifjan's Zone 1 gym May 15, pitted Arifjan's Killer Bees against Camp Buehring's Scorpions. While the score indicates a rout, those who saw the opening minutes of the game witnessed a back-and-forth exchange that forecasted a more evenly matched game.

A bit of unsportsmanlike conduct before the game even began set the tone for the early minutes when an Arifjan player refused to shake hands with any of the Buehring team members. The move drew no applause, but when a Buehring player jokingly returned the gesture, the crowd, acutely aware of his intent, laughed and cheered him on.

Whether that exchange meant anything or not is hard to tell. If anything, it spurred both teams to come out blazing – at least on defense. Early on, the ball turned over so many times that it was hard to remember who had put it in play. For minutes, it seemed, the score hung at 9-8 in favor of Arifjan.

A number of uncalled fouls in the first half drew the attention of the crowd, who were in no mood for a slug fest. They wanted to see some real basketball. Halfway through the first period, only three fouls had been called, though the game had been extremely physical.

The crowd began to heckle the referee for his lack of calls. "What's the matter with that whistle, is it broke?" chided Jerome Wright, who sat easily within earshot of the ref. Even Sgt. Maj. Ray Middleton, the ASG-Kuwait sergeant major, couldn't help but comment on the referee's mute whistle. "You don't need to be blowing that whistle – give it to the other guy," he blared, drawing the delight of the crowd.

But by halfway through the first period, Arifjan began to run away with the game.

A time out taken by Buehring gave Arifjan the time it needed to organize its defense.

Arifjan coach Willie Allen said "I had to calm them down. Once I got them slowed down, we went into our swarm mode."

The Arifjan team's pressure, said Allen,

was what helped them dominate. "We had two different presses – the sting mode and the swarm," he said.

Swarm worked the best, he asserted.

Whatever the Killer Bees were doing, it was working. Their tight defense and some poor shooting on the part of the Scorpions helped Arifjan open a gap. A huge dunk by Arifjan's Reggie Hopkins added to the sense that it was Arifjan's game. An Arifjan shooting spree led to a halftime score of 35-22 with the Scorpions down and wondering where they were going to go from there.

The second and final period began ominously for Buehring. They got the ball right away, but a poor shot turned the ball over and Arifjan scored easily. Buehring's second possession was almost a repeat of the first, except this time, Hopkins tried to dunk on the far end and was fouled. Buehring might as well have given him the points.

Less than five minutes into the second half Arifjan had already outscored Buehring 11-5. Soon, that jumped to 20-5. Arifjan scored 15 unanswered points on Buehring, and when Buehring finally did score, even their fans had lost the stomach to cheer.

Arifjan continued to capitalize on their strong rebounding as they drew the score out to 65-32 with five minutes left. It seemed that Arifjan would easily double their opponents' score. Buehring was able to keep that from happening, but just barely as it took them the rest of the game to score their next 13 points.

That the Killer Bees were able to so flawlessly execute their defense was no minor feat. The team practiced for just three evenings before the tournament, which brought teams from all of Kuwait's military camps to compete over a two-day span.

But it wasn't all defense. No team outscored its opposition by 30 points without a dominant offense. The Killer Bees had



Camp Arifjan's Reggie Hopkins dunks the ball with little opposition in the first half of Arifjan's 75-45 win over Camp Buehring in the finals of the Area Support Group – Kuwait basketball tournament May 15. Hopkins won a slam dunk contest earlier in the evening.

that in Demetrius Cattle and Hopkins, who had proven their shooting skills prior to the championship match.

Before the game began, three-point and slam-dunk contests determined who had the hottest hands. Cattle, a three-point specialist, won that contest. Hopkins, the shortest man in the dunk contest, won so easily that the others in the competition might as well have not shown up.

Going into the game with these two was a definite advantage. Buehring's Scorpions pretended not to notice their opponent's skills. To them, the loss was just part of the growing process for the young team.

"We came in as the underdogs," said Buehring's Joseph Grammona. "For being in second place now, come August, we got this," he said referring to an upcoming tournament that will likely be a rematch of this one.

Buehring's Darryl Leverett left Arifjan with a warning for the next tournament. "Next time, be ready for those young gunners."

Community

happenings for May 25 through June 1

Arifjan

Wednesday

Bingo Night, 7 p.m., Zone 1 Community Center
Country Night, 7 p.m., Zone 6 stage
Legs, butts and guts, 5:30 a.m., Stretch and flex
8 a.m., Step Aerobics, 1 p.m., Circuit weight
training, 3 p.m., Zone 1 gym
Lap swimming, 5 to 7 a.m., pool

Thursday

Country Western Night, 7 p.m., Zone 1
Community Center
Cardio kickboxing, 5:30 a.m., Stretch and Flex, 8
a.m. Circuit Weight Training 3 p.m., Zone 2 gym
Lap swimming, 5 to 7 a.m., pool

Friday

Arifjan Boxing Team, 7:30 p.m., Zone 6 gym
Salsa Night, 7 p.m., Zone 1 Community Center
Lap swimming, 5 to 7 a.m., pool
Interval training, 5:30 a.m., 1 p.m. and 3 p.m.
Zone 1 gym

Saturday

90s Music Night, 7 p.m., Zone 1 Community
Center
Audie Murphy Club study sessions, 3 p.m.,
Building 508 Room 25B
Country Western Night, 7:30 p.m., Zone 6 MWR
stage
Circuit weight training, 5:30 a.m., 8 a.m., 1 p.m.
and 3 p.m., Zone 1 gym
Lap swimming, 5 to 7 a.m., pool

Sunday

Salsa Night, 7 p.m., Zone 6 stage
Memorial Day weekend track meet, 7 - 11 a.m.,
Preliminary heats, 7 - 9 p.m., Zone 1 gym
Lap swimming, 5 to 7 a.m., pool
Cardio kickboxing, 5:30 a.m., Stretch and Flex, 8
a.m., Circuit Weight Training, 1 p.m., Step
Aerobics, 3 p.m., Zone 1 gym

Monday

Arifjan Boxing Team, 7:30 p.m., Zone 6 gym
Lap swimming, 5 to 7 a.m., pool
Legs, butts and guts, 5:30 a.m., Stretch and flex
8 a.m., Step Aerobics, 1 p.m., Circuit weight
training, 3 p.m., Zone 1 gym

Tuesday

Lap swimming, 5 to 7 a.m., pool
Cardio kickboxing, 5:30 a.m., Stretch and Flex, 8
a.m., Circuit Weight Training, 1 p.m., Step
Aerobics, 3 p.m., Zone 1 gym

Wednesday

Country Western Night, 7 p.m., Zone 6 stage
Legs, butts and guts, 5:30 a.m., Stretch and flex
8 a.m., Step Aerobics, 1 p.m., Circuit weight
training, 3 p.m., Zone 1 gym
Lap swimming, 5 to 7 a.m., pool

For more information call 430-1202

Buehring

Wednesday

Softball league game, 4 p.m., (Call for info)
Walking Club (5 miles), 5:30 a.m., command cell
flagpole
Massage Therapy, 9:30 a.m., MWR Tent 4
Aerobics, 6:30 - 7:30 p.m., MWR Tent 4

Thursday

Country Night, 9 p.m., MWR bunker
Soccer league game, 4 p.m., (Call for info)
Volleyball league game, 4 p.m., (Call for info)

Walking Club (5 miles), 5:30 a.m., command cell
flagpole

Tae-Kwon-Do Class, 7 p.m., MWR Tent 1

Friday

Walking Club (5 miles), 5:30 a.m., command cell
flagpole

Saturday

Tae-Kwon-Do Class, 7 p.m., MWR Tent 1

Sunday

Walking Club (10 miles), 5:30 a.m., command
cell flagpole

Monday

Softball league game, 4 p.m., (Call for info)
Walking Club (5 miles), 5:30 a.m., command cell
flagpole
Aerobics, 6:30 - 7:30 p.m., MWR Tent 4

Tuesday

Soccer league game, 4 p.m., (Call for info)
Volleyball league game, 4 p.m., (Call for info)
Walking Club (5 miles), 5:30 a.m., command cell
flagpole

Tae-Kwon-Do Class, 7 p.m., MWR Tent 1

Wednesday

Softball league game, 4 p.m., (Call for info)
Walking Club (5 miles), 5:30 a.m., command cell
flagpole
Massage Therapy, 9:30 a.m., MWR Tent 4
Aerobics, 6:30 - 7:30 p.m., MWR Tent 4

For more information call 828-1340

Kuwaiti Naval Base

Friday

Fishing Tournament (Call for info)

Saturday

Barbecue, DFAC (Call for info)

For more information call 839-1063

Navistar

Wednesday

Horseshoe Tournament Practice, 8 a.m. - 10 p.m.
Self Defense class, 9 a.m. and 7 p.m., basketball
court
Aerobics Class, 6 p.m., Game tent

Thursday

Horseshoe Tournament Practice, 8 a.m. - 10 p.m.
Karate Class, 9 a.m. and 7 p.m., basketball court

Friday

MWR representative meeting, 1 p.m., MWR
office

Horseshoe Tournament Practice, 8 a.m. - 10 p.m.
Aerobics Class, 6 p.m., MWR game tent

Saturday

Horseshoe tournament, 5 - 8 p.m., horseshoe
pits

Sunday

Horseshoe tournament, 5 - 8 p.m., horseshoe
pits

Monday

Chess and Backgammon Tournament practice, 8
a.m. - 10 p.m., MWR game tent
Aerobics Class, 6 p.m., MWR game tent
Self Defense class, 9 a.m. and 7 p.m., basketball
court

Tuesday

Chess and Backgammon Tournament practice, 8
a.m. - 10 p.m., MWR game tent
Karate Class, 9 a.m. and 7 p.m., basketball court
Smoking cessation classes, 10 a.m., Rec. tent
Education/Awareness/Prevention, 1 p.m., Rec.
tent

Karate Class, 9 a.m. and 7 p.m., basketball court

Wednesday

Chess and Backgammon Tournament practice, 8
a.m. - 10 p.m., MWR game tent
Self Defense class, 9 a.m. and 7 p.m., basketball
court

Aerobics Class, 6 p.m., MWR game tent

For more information call 844-1137

Spearhead/SPOD

Thursday

Horseshoes, 7 p.m., MWR area
Bingo Night, 7 p.m., Tent T-32 and 8 p.m., South
DFAC

Friday

Memorial Day fun run (Call for info)
Movie Night, 8 p.m., Outdoor Movie Theater

Saturday

Movie Night, 8 p.m., Outdoor Movie Theater

Monday

Horseshoes, 7 p.m., MWR area

For more information call 825-1302

Victory

Tuesday

Movie Night, 8 p.m. (Call for info)

For more information call 823-1033

Virginia

Wednesday

Country Western Night, 7 p.m., Dusty Room
Bench and Pull-up competition, 4 p.m., gym

Thursday

Karaoke Night, 7 p.m., Dusty Room

Friday

Salsa Night, 7 p.m., Dusty Room
Spades Tournament, 6 p.m., Dusty Room

Saturday

Hip Hop/R&B Night, 7 p.m., Dusty Room
Dominoes Tournament, 6 p.m., Dusty Room

Sunday

Old School Jams, 7 p.m., Dusty Room
Catch Phrase Tournament, 6 p.m., Dusty Room

Monday

Move Night, 7 p.m., Dusty Room
Ping Pong Tournament, 6 p.m., MWR tent

Tuesday

Bingo Night, 7 p.m., Dusty Room

Wednesday

Country Western Night, 7 p.m., Dusty Room
Ping Pong Tournament, 6 p.m., MWR tent

For more information call 832-1045

**Are you holding an
event you'd like to
see listed in the
Desert Voice?**

Send your event listings
to the Desert Voice edi-
tor at the e-mail address
listed on the back page
of this issue.

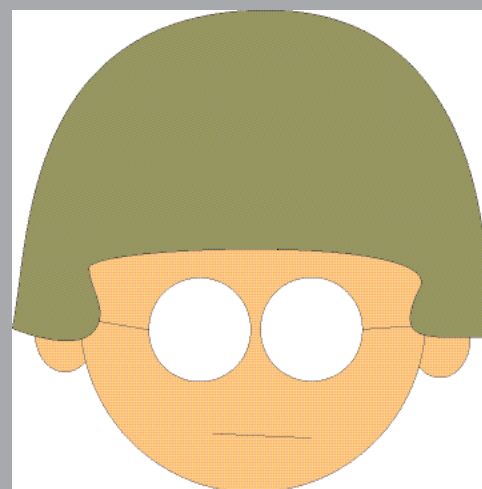
Untitled poem from a mother

By Mary Toney

dedicated to her daughter Staff Sgt. Melissa Webb

Here is my daughter
Who is fighting for her country's honor
Fighting a war that was brought to our shores
A daughter, a sister, a mother, a wife, who fights for the rights
Of a land where daughters have no rights and are hidden from sight.
I salute you my daughter for doing what is right, and hope from this fight
These daughters are brought into the light, and given back their right to life.
Here's to you my daughter.

ARMY LIFE by Michael Verrett



Send your
submissions to:

DESERT VOICE

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Peachtree Road Race

Start preparing for the largest 10K
road race in the world.

5 a.m. July 4
at Camp Arifjan

More information and registration
forms coming soon

